

POOLS, SPAS & HOT TUBS



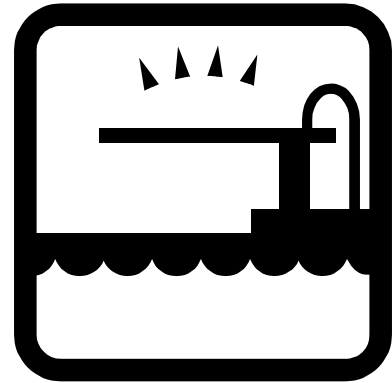
Fairfax County
VIRGINIA

Land Development Services

Department of Public Works and Environmental Services

Hours of Operation: Monday - Thursday: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Friday: 9:15 to 4:00 p.m.

Location: **Herrity Building**
12055 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax, VA 22035-5504
Telephone: 703-222-0801
TTY: 703-324-1877



Visit us on the web at: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes

This publication provides guidelines for installing residential in-ground or above-ground swimming pools, spas and hot tubs in accordance with the *2000 Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code*. The requirements herein are the most common and are not representative of all conditions you may encounter.

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PERMITS REQUIRED

You must obtain permits for the installation of a swimming pool, spa or hot tub. Listed below are the types of permits required, depending on the type of project. Except as noted below, apply for your permits at the **Permit Application Center** located at the Herrity Building, 2nd floor, telephone: **703-222-0801, TTY 703-324-1877**.

- **Building permit** for structural elements of an in-ground or above-ground swimming pool only.
- **Electrical permit** for all electrical installations. (A portable, self-contained spa or hot tub not installed on a deck may only require an electrical permit.)
- **Mechanical permit** for propane-fueled pool heaters and related tanks.
- **Plumbing permit** for natural gas-fueled pool heaters.
- **Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) permit** may be required for the right-of-way of heavy equipment required for pool construction when your property is located on a state road. Apply at the **VDOT Permit Office** 14628 Avion Parkway, Suite 120, Chantilly, telephone: **703-383-2888, TTY 711**.

HELPFUL HINT: You may obtain permits in your own name; however, if a contractor is to perform the work, it is strongly recommended that the contractor secure the permit and be listed as the responsible party. In this way, the County will be in a better position to assist you in gaining compliance with codes if the work is defective. A contractor must be properly licensed in order to obtain a permit.

BEFORE OBTAINING A PERMIT

COVENANTS AND DEED RESTRICTIONS

Covenants and Deed Restrictions are regulations set forth by many homeowner or civic associations. While not enforced by Fairfax County, some regulations may restrict construction. For more information, contact your association or the Land Records office in the Jennings Building (Judicial Center), 3rd Floor, 4110 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax, telephone: **703-691-7320, TTY 711**.

BUILDING CODES & STANDARDS

The *Code of Virginia* requires that your pool, spa or hot tub comply with the *2000 Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC)* which incorporates the *2000 International Residential Code (IRC)* for residential construction. The IRC requires all pools, spas and hot tubs to comply with the applicable standards listed below.

- In-ground pools: ANSI/NSPI-5.
- Above-ground pools: ANSI/NSPI-4.
- Portable spas and hot tubs: ANSI/NSPI-6.
- Permanently installed spas and hot tubs: ANSI/NSPI-3.

You may purchase an IRC at the Publications Center located in Suite 156 of the Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, telephone: **703-324-2974, TTY 711**, or online at www.iccsafe.org. The IRC is also available in the reference section of the Fairfax County regional libraries. For pool standards, contact the National Spa and Pool Institute at **703-838-0083, TTY 711**, or online at www.nspi.org.

ZONING REQUIREMENTS

The following zoning requirements pertain to in-ground and above-ground swimming pools only. Zoning restrictions only apply to spas and hot tubs installed on decks. Please contact the Zoning Permit Review Branch at **703-222-1082, TTY 711** for more information.

- Swimming pools may be located in the rear and side yards of any lot. On lots over 36,000 sf, pools may be located in front of the dwelling. Please note: a corner lot is considered to have two front yards.
- If an above-ground pool is less than 7'-0" in height, it may be located in any rear or side yard.
- Swimming pools which cover a large percentage of the yard may be restricted; call the numbers above for more information.

POOL ENCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS

All outdoor pools, spas and hot tubs with water over 24" deep, must be protected with a barrier as outlined below.

- **Height:** 48" minimum above grade measured from the outside face of the barrier.
- **Openings:**
 - 2" maximum between grade and bottom of barrier
 - 4" maximum between top of above-ground pool wall and bottom of barrier when barrier is attached to top of pool wall.
 - All other openings shall not allow the passage of a 4" diameter sphere.
 - See also Climability below.
- **Climability:**
 - Solid barriers (stone walls, etc.) must have no protrusions or indentations.
 - Horizontal members less than 45" apart must be located on the inside face of the barrier. In such cases, the space between corresponding vertical members must be 1.75" or less.
 - Chain link or lattice-type barriers with diagonal members must have openings less than 1.75" measured horizontally or 1.25" measured diagonally. Slats may be placed in openings to reduce size to the required dimension.
 - Decorative cut-outs within a vertical member must not have openings greater than 1.75".

- **Access Gates:**

- Must meet height, opening and climbability requirements for barriers.
- Must be self-closing and self-latching, and must open outward away from pool.
- Latches less than 54" from the bottom of the gate must be located on pool side only within 3" from top of the gate. There shall be no openings 3" or greater within 18" of the latch.
- Latches located greater than 54" from the bottom of the gate may be located on both sides.

- **Doors alarms:** (equipped on doors which open from house directly to pool area)

- Must sound immediately and continuously for 30 seconds.
- Must be heard throughout the house.
- Must reset automatically.
- Must be able to be temporarily deactivated. Mechanism to deactivate must be 54" above the door threshold.

- **Spas and Hot Tubs:** Safety covers may be substituted for barriers provided such covers meet standard ASTM F1346.

MINIMUM SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All submissions for an above-ground and in-ground pools must include the following:

- ☐ Two sets of building plans (see below).
- ☐ Two copies of the house location plat or grading plan (see below).

BUILDING PLANS

Building Plans must meet the requirements or show the items listed below.

- ☐ Minimum scale of $\frac{1}{8}" = 1'-0"$; all dimensions must be shown.
- ☐ Minimum sheet size: $8\frac{1}{2}" \times 11"$, no pencil.
- ☐ Name, address, and occupation of the designer.
- ☐ If plans are prepared by a Virginia registered design professional, at least one set of plans must bear the **original** seal, signature, and date. This set will be retained by the County. **This is a requirement for all concrete or gunite in-ground pools.**
- ☐ List of material specifications including, but not limited to, concrete strength and yield stress of reinforcing steel.
- ☐ Method of pool discharge drainage.
- ☐ For in-ground pools, wall sections with size and spacing of reinforcing steel.
- ☐ For in-ground fiberglass pools, manufacturers specifications.
- ☐ For above-ground pools, two copies of the assembly instructions.

HOUSE LOCATION PLATS

If you do not have a copy of your house location plat, review your loan closing documents or contact your mortgage lending institution to obtain one. You may also contact the Zoning Permit Review Branch on the 2nd floor of the Herrity Building, telephone **703-222-1082, TTY 711; please note:** plats are not available for all properties. If you are unable to locate a copy of your plat through these sources, you will be required to hire a certified land surveyor or civil engineer to have one prepared.

House location plats must meet the following requirements:

- ☐ No reduced, enlarged, or faxed copies.
- ☐ The area of the in-ground or above-ground pool, drawn to scale.
- ☐ Note the actual square footage or overall dimensions of the pool.

GRADING PLAN

A grading plan (a three-dimensional drawing showing existing and proposed topography), Conservation Agreement and deposit, and a Pro-Rata Share Agreement are required if the swimming pool:

- disturbs more than 2500 square feet,
- blocks existing drainage patterns, or
- requires more than 18 inches of cut or fill.

The conservation deposit will be returned to you after construction is completed and the County site inspectors have approved the site, provided the County has not expended funds to correct violations. For more detailed information, a handout entitled *Grading Plans* is available, or contact the Site Permits Branch, on the 2nd floor of the Herrity Building, telephone: **703-324-1510, TTY 711**.

SOILS

Above-ground or in-ground swimming pools constructed in an unmapped or problem soil require special requirements; see below. For more information, contact the Site Permits Branch on the 2nd floor of the Herrity Building, telephone: **703-324-1510, TTY 711**.

- **Unmapped soils** occur where the soils have not been previously identified on soil maps. If your property falls within one of these unmapped areas, you must hire a soil scientist to identify the soil or you must design the foundation for a worst case soil situation. A brochure, entitled *Residential Construction in Unmapped Soils Areas*, is available for more assistance.
- **Problem soils** are soil types which may have a high water table, expansive clays, or other behavioral problems. If your property contains a problem soil, you may need to hire a registered design professional to design the foundation system.

OBTAINING A PERMIT

PERMIT PROCESS

Bring the construction documents described herein to the Permit Application Center on the 2nd floor of the Herrity Building where your permit process will begin. Here you will complete a *building permit application*. Permit technicians will direct you to the appropriate agencies necessary for permit approval. The applicable departments for a swimming pool, spa or hot tub are:

- **Zoning** ensures the location of an in-ground and above-ground swimming pool is in accordance with the County Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Permit Review Branch is located at the Herrity Building, 2nd floor, telephone: **703-222-1082, TTY 711**. PLEASE NOTE: a zoning evaluation is required for spas and hot tubs installed on decks only.
- **Site Permits** will review the plat for site-related issues, soils, and conformance to the *Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance*. Site Permits is located at the Herrity Building, 2nd floor, telephone: **703-324-1510, TTY 711**.
- **Health Department**, located at 10777 Main Street, Fairfax, telephone: **703-246-2444, TTY 711**, will review for clearances to existing septic systems and/or wells if they exist on the property.
- **Building Plan Review**, located on the 2nd floor of the Herrity Building, telephone: **703-222-0114, TTY 711**, will review for compliance to the applicable building codes.

The building permit is issued when all required approvals have been obtained and applicable fees have been paid. Once your permits are issued, you must post a copy on the job site until the project has received final approval.

WALK-THRU PROGRAM

The Residential Walk-Thru Program allows you to walk their submission package to each approving agency with the permit usually being issued on the same day.

TRADE PERMIT PROCESS

Mechanical, plumbing and electrical permits are issued after the building permit approval if required, but may be processed at the same time. In most cases they do not require a plan submission; code compliance will be determined at the time of the inspection.

FEES

For information on the related fees for a swimming pool, spa or hot tub contact the following:

- Permit Application Center for building and electrical permits at **703-222-0801, TTY 703-324-1877** or visit **www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes**.
- Plan and Document Control for site related permit and fees at **703-324-1730, TTY 711**.
- Health Department for fees related to septic systems and wells at **703-246-2444, TTY 711**.
- VDOT at **703-383-2888, TTY 711**.

AFTER OBTAINING A PERMIT

REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLIC UTILITIES

You must call "*Miss Utility*," a free service, at **1-800-552-7001, TTY 711** before excavating to ensure that the construction does not interfere with underground utility lines. If you fail to contact Miss Utility and damage occurs, you will be liable for all costs of repair.

INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS

- A copy of the approved permit, plat or grading plan and building plans must be on the job site and must be available to the inspector during each inspection.
- You may choose to use a pre-approved licensed professional to perform the foundation inspections. Contact the Residential Inspections Division, at **703-631-5101, TTY 711**, prior to activation of the building permit. **Please note: this is a requirement for swimming pools built on problem soils.**
- Please review the attached Inspection Timing Checklist to determine the time and number of inspections required.

SCHEDULING AN INSPECTION

It is the responsibility of the permit holder or the permit holder's representative to notify the County when the stages of construction are reached that require an inspection. Ladders, scaffolds, and testing equipment required to complete an inspection must be provided. Inspection requests may be made using one of the three methods listed below; please have your permit number available when scheduling an inspection. Requests made prior to 11:59 p.m. on automated systems will be scheduled for the next workday.

- Inspection Request Center: **703-222-0455**, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday – Thursday, and 9:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Fridays.
- Automated Inspection Request System (AIRS): **703-222-2474**, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Building Code Services Online: **www.fairfaxcounty.gov/isisnet**, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

INSPECTION TIMING CHECKLIST	
INSPECTION TYPE	REQUIREMENTS PRIOR TO INSPECTION Notes: 1. Approval must be obtained prior to proceeding with the next applicable element. 2. All inspections are conducted by residential inspectors.
Structural steel, pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The formwork must be prepared and inspected prior to placement of concrete. • Reinforcing steel must be in place. • If problem soil, inspection must be made by geotechnical engineer.
Bonding Pool (electrical)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metallic elements of swimming pool must be in place. • Trenches and conduits must be in place.
First gas (plumbing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural gas heater and gas piping must be in place. • Trenches must not be covered.
Final	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Propane or natural gas heater, piping, and propane tank must be in place.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrical wiring must be complete.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appliances, motors, pumps, outlets, panels, switches, etc. must be installed..
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All work on the approved plans must be complete including final grading.

Fairfax County is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in all county programs, services and activities and will provide this document in alternative formats and in different languages upon request. Please call 703-324-5033, TTY 711 or write DPWES, Room 659, the Herrity Building, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, VA 22035-5506. Please allow at least seven working days for preparation of material.

